

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Figures 13 and 48 being labeled "PRIOR ART"

Attachment: 2 Replacement Sheets

REMARKS

Claims 1-24 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 1-3 have been examined in the subject application. By way of this amendment, Applicants have cancelled claims 6-24, leaving claims 1-5 pending. Claims 4 and 5 depend from claim 1, but have been withdrawn from consideration. However, since it is submitted that claim 1 patentably distinguishes over the prior art, it is submitted that all dependent claims, including claims 2-5 should be allowed in the subject application.

The Examiner has requested that Figures 13 and 48 be labeled "PRIOR ART". These Figures have been labeled accordingly in the attached drawings.

The Examiner has objected to the claim 3 as containing an improper ",", which has been removed by way of the above amendment.

Claims 1-3 have been rejected under § 112 (second paragraph) as being indefinite. In view of the above amendments to the claims, it is submitted that this rejection has been overcome.

Claims 1-3 have been rejected under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the admitted prior art of Figure 13 in view of Pitner (U.S. Patent No. 3,964,802). Specifically, the Examiner asserts that Figure 13 teaches the claimed linear guide device having a guide rail, a slider and drawing elements, but does not disclose the claimed slider having end caps. It is for this reason that the Examiner relies on Pitner. However, for the following reasons, it is submitted that claim 1 patentably distinguishes over the prior art.

Pitner fails to disclose an inner-diameter side guide groove formed in a direction change path. In the structure of Pitner, since a part of the separator of Pitner, which corresponds to the claimed arm portion, is inserted into an axial-end (side surface) of the rolling element, even

though the arm portion is not guided by the inner-diameter side of the direction changing path, shackles 23, 123 does not move to the inner-diameter side. If the shackles 23, 123 moved, the operability of the linear guide apparatus would be deteriorated, and in a worst case the bearing body 51 would become locked.

On contrary, the separator of the claimed invention does not have the part inserted into the axial flat end of the rolling element. Thus, in a case that the gap between the rollers becomes large, and if the guide groove formed on the inner-diameter side of the direction change path is not formed on the slider, there is possibility that the would separator fall off the rollers into the inner side and the linear guide apparatus may become locked.

The present invention aims to achieve smooth operation of the linear guide apparatus having the separator with an arm portion which is not connected to the roller bearing. This purpose is achieved by enlarging the groove width at the direction changing path relative to the groove width at a linear portion.

Pitner disclose groove width at the linear portion being smaller than the groove width at the direction changing path. This structure is realized by removing an inner side guide portion of the slider. Because the arm portion of Pitner is inserted into the side surface of the roller and the arm portion is surely supported, there is no fear that the separator would fall off the rollers into the inner-diameter side at the direction changing path. Thus, the above mentioned structure can be employed. In other words, if the arm portion is not inserted into the side surface of the roller, because there is a possibility of falling of the separator and lock of the linear guide apparatus, the skilled person would not employ the above mentioned structure.

On the other hand, in the present invention, the arm portion of the separator just contacts with the side flat surface of the roller and is not supported. That is, if the gap between the rollers

is large, there is a concern that the separator may fall off from the rollers into the inner side at the direction changing path. Therefore, considering the problem that the separator may fall off from the rollers, the skilled person should not employ this concept to achieve purpose of the invention. That is, there is no motivation to combine Pitner with AAPA to achieve the claimed invention.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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